

**GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON MINORITY AND WOMEN'S ENTERPRISES**  
**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**  
**MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2006**

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The Division submitted the application to the U.S. Department of Commerce for the **Minority Business Enterprise Center grant** on September 20. In mid November, the State was notified that it is the likely recipient of the award which is to be announced in early January. The Center will be charged with increasing revenue, jobs, contracting potential, and loans and insurance to minority-owned businesses with more than \$500,000 in annual revenue. The MWBE Division will oversee the Center; consultation services will be provided by an outside consulting firm that has expertise in business development. Should the Division receive the award; the grant will be for **\$600,000** over three years beginning in January, 2007.

IDOA has initiated **Contract Compliance meetings** with **OneIndiana** vendors. Through these meetings IDOA is able to identify MBE and WBE concerns and challenges faced by OneIndiana contract holders and formulate action plans to ensure compliance with the MWBE program. For example, at the October 12 meeting, **Dell Computers** was allowed to **increase the number of M/WBE partners** to ensure that the skill sets on tap from MWBEs on this contract are broad enough to cover a wide range of Dell's service needs and thus hit Dell's MWBE commitments.

The Division recently completed its work with **INDOT to help the agency adopt the MWBE construction program on 100% state-funded highway projects**. The first INDOT bids were let last month utilizing the IDOA MWBE Construction program, and now the State is consistently holding all contractors to the same MWBE construction standards. Based on **feedback from highway contractors**, some minor procedural adjustments will be made to the program. However, the policy will remain substantively as it is.

On November 28<sup>th</sup> and December 4<sup>th</sup>, the Division held the first of a new regularly scheduled workshop series for certified and re-certified companies called "**Maximizing the Opportunities of State Certification**". The trainings were held at Ivy Tech Lawrence Campus and supported by the **Central Indiana Small Business Development Center**. Both trainings were very successful with great feedback on surveys. Both classes were filled to capacity. The class limit was held to 35 or less to create a more suitable training environment. Survey results indicate that **82%** of attendees believe that the practical skills obtained through the training will have an **above average or excellent impact on their ability to manage their business**.

The Division is continuing its strengthened relationship with the SBDCs across the state. Last week, Claudia Cummings attended the **SBDC's quarterly state-wide meeting** to receive feedback from the centers and **request assistance with MBE recruitment** and the use of SBDC client lists.

The Division has just completed **the first of its audits of M/WBE contract data collected using the recently-implemented electronic contract management system**. To complete the audit, the division worked with agencies throughout state government to verify data already entered and re-trained agency employees as necessary to improve future data integrity.

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**Commissioner Charlie Garcia** recently **resigned** from the MWBE Commission due to the demands of other commitments. Also, recent staff changes include the introduction of **Charles Hill in the compliance section** and the creation of **two new positions** which will be announced in about two weeks. The new staffing will better enable the Division to enforce MWBE utilization and reporting.

On September 8, the Division **hosted an open house** attended by other **certifying agencies** in the central Indiana area, including the SBA, the City of Indianapolis, Indiana Business Diversity Council, and INDOT. The goal of the event was to gain an understanding of the roles of specific personnel in each organization so as to **improved customer service** to MBEs and WBEs when cross-referring clients.

Recently, **Kacia Palmer**, Northwest Business Relations Specialist was awarded a **Spot Bonus** for her exceptional level of productivity with regard to certifications as well as her targeted efforts to open new markets for the MWBE program in her territory. For example, she identified Lafayette as a key market for MWBE firms and she now participates in the Supplier Diversity Council meeting to help large Lafayette-area businesses with MWBE recruitment. She has also worked with Purdue on their MWBE planning.

**Purdue** hosted a **Supplier Diversity Networking and Training opportunity** at which Ms. Palmer presented. It was **two days** of supplier diversity seminars on November 15 and 16. The event focused on networking and matching buyers and sellers as well as making connections with private sector diversity suppliers around the State. There were between 200-250 in attendance.

Ms. Palmer also began to provide certification application assistance monthly to minority and women business owners in Northwest Indiana as a part of a clinic held by the **Empowerment Zone, located in Gary**. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, she participated in the **Annual Casino Minority and Women's Business Outreach Fair**.

On August 23, the Division participated in an event held by **Indiana University** to **help non-certified IU vendors** become certified. This has become a regular quarterly training class.

Deputy Commissioner Cummings met with the **South Bend Small Business Development Center and the South Bend Economic Development Office** on October 5 to talk about long-range M/WBE development planning in northern Indiana in light of recent changes at a significant MWBE service provider in their area. These meetings followed Cummings' October 4 appearance on behalf of Lt. Governor Skillman at the **St. Joseph Regional Medical Center** construction press conference. The Med Center announced their **self-initiated M/WBE utilization goals**.

On November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Division took part in a networking opportunity called "**Bringing the Marketplace to You**". An estimated 125 vendors were in attendance. Representatives primarily from Indianapolis-area large public sector construction projects gave brief presentations on future scopes of work.

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The Division recently participated in the **Historically Underutilized Small Business (HUSB) Day training activities**. The HUSB is a loose association of supplier diversity professionals from both the private and public sectors. Both Commissioner Henderson and Deputy Commissioner Cummings spoke at the event which was attended by about 200 business owners.

The Division participated in other events this quarter including a **National Association of Women Business Owners reception** on August 22.